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Marriage Migration Policy in South Korea: Social Investment beyond the Nation State

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ABSTRACT

This article seeks to contribute to understandings of South Korea's approach to marriage migration. Situating our analysis of marriage migration policy specifically within the recent emergence of a social investment approach to welfare, we bring together two bodies of literature that due to the methodological nationalism of much welfare state scholarship are usually treated separately. Through an examination of the policy framework governing marriage migration – so-called 'multicultural family policies' - we find that successive Korean governments have actively sought female marriage migrants to perform various social reproductive roles as a means to secure the reproductive capacity of the nation, just as feminist scholars have argued the care work of citizen-mothers can be understood. Our analysis also suggests that marriage migration policy in Korea constitutes a distinctly transnational dimension to its overall social investment approach, which is strongly motivated by concerns to reproduce the next generation of human capital.

Keywords: marriage migration, social investment, social reproduction, transnational

INTRODUCTION

Related in part to the country's economic outperformance in Asia, South Korea (hereafter Korea) has undergone a rapid transition from the mid-1990s to a migrant-receiving country (Castles, 2014). Growth in marriage migration, predominantly of female migrants, is a major aspect of Korea's migration transition and its migration policy development (Castles and Miller, 2009). In contrast to Western states (Bonjour and Kraler, 2015), marriage migration has been regarded as a welcome migration stream in Korea; it has come to occupy a comparatively privileged position within Korea's overall migration regime and successive governments have actively engaged in managing marriage migration. Korea now has a comprehensive set of policies targeted specifically at marriage migrants and their families, spanning a range of policy fields that goes beyond migration to include education, social security and childcare.

This development has coincided with Korea's transformation from one of the poorest countries in the world to a high-income welfare state with all major social programmes in place. For this reason, the Korean case has attracted attention from social policy researchers. So far, their portrayals of the Korean welfare (state) regime center largely on the 'developmental' or the 'productivist' welfare state. A recent body of scholarship, however, highlights Korea's shift towards a 'social investment' state (Peng, 2011a, 2014; Lee and Baek, 2014). The social investment paradigm constitutes a set of policies and ideas that emerged in the mid-1990s within national, transnational and international institutions across the globe as a response to fundamental changes in the labour markets and demographic structures of advanced industrialized societies, and their ensuing new social risks (Jenson, 2017). To address such challenges, the social investment perspective emphasises the "imperative to reproduce - biologically and cognitively - human capital, therefore investing in having and raising children, and to be in employment as much as possible" (Saraceno, 2015: 10).

This article situates analysis of marriage migration within the social investment approach in order to contribute to understandings of Korea's approach to marriage migration, both its encouragement of it and the characteristics of the policy package it has developed around it. We argue that Korea's approach to marriage migration can be understood as part of its more

general concern to reproduce the population for human capital purposes within the context of demographic ageing, combined with a persistently low fertility rate. Our argument requires that we bring together two bodies of literature, the one on migration, the other on social investment, that due to the continuing 'methodological nationalism' of much welfare state scholarship (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002; Clarke, 2005), are usually treated separately. Thus, for example, while discussions of social investment in Western welfare states trace the origins of the ideas back to the highly influential writings of Alva and Gunnar Myrdal on solutions to Sweden's fertility crisis in the 1930s (Morel et al., 2012), they fail to mention that the Myrdals explicitly considered but rejected immigration as a solution to Sweden's 'population problem' due to fears that migrants would be difficult to assimilate (Jackson, 2014). Such an elision of the migration dimension is symptomatic of the 'container-model' approach to the study of the social investment paradigm, which 'contains' analysis within the territorial and institutional boundaries of the nation state. Yet, our study suggests that marriage migration policy in Korea constitutes a distinctly transnational dimension to its overall social investment approach. More precisely, we argue that while analysis of the social investment paradigm is generally focused on the mobilization of 'citizens' for human capital development purposes (see Esping-Andersen et al., 2002), consideration of the treatment of marriage migration in Korea reveals that its approach to social investment stretches beyond its own national borders and incorporates non-citizens too. This finding, we suggest, has the potential to inform understandings of the social investment approach to welfare beyond the specific case of Korea.

The article first investigates Korea's evolution from a developmental state to a social investment welfare state, identifying the centrality of demographic concerns in Korea around population ageing and falling fertility rates. The article then turns to examine the scale, pattern and drivers of the growth in marriage migration in Korea from a demand perspective, which we argue are also bound up with Korea's 'reproductive crisis'. The article continues by analysing marriage migrant policies, demonstrating how those policies, framed within a social investment paradigm, are structured to ensure that marriage migrants contribute to stabilising families' social reproductive functions throughout the life course of families. Those functions comprise the production and reproduction of people as physical and social beings, incorporating on the one hand, family building through relationship formation and procreation, and on the other hand, the ongoing care required in the maintenance of people on a daily basis (Kofman and Raghuram, 2015; Kilkey and Palenga-Möllenbeck, 2016).

We argue that successive Korean governments, developing policies within a social investment framework, have actively sought female marriage migrants to perform those roles and have supported them to do so. In this way, we suggest, marriage migrants' social reproductive role can be understood as vital to the reproduction of the nation, just as feminist scholars have argued that the care work of 'citizen-mothers' can be understood (Yuval-Davis and Anthias (Eds), 1989; Yuval-Davis, 1996; Roseneil et al., 2013). Analysed from this perspective, marriage migrants' procreation and care for children as a new generation of future citizens serves to legitimize their comparatively privileged position as migrants within Korea's political and social citizenship regime. The article concludes by identifying what our analysis contributes to understandings of the approach to marriage migration in Korea, as well as to understandings of the social investment welfare state in Korea and potentially beyond.

KOREA'S EVOLUTION TO A SOCIAL INVESTMENT WELFARE STATE: PRODUCTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE CHALLENGES

The significance of the emergence in Korea of a social investment approach, strongly focused on addressing productive and reproductive concerns, is apparent when viewed in the context of the historical development of its welfare state. The early history of the Korean (welfare) state was characterized by its developmental aspects. From the 1960s the state's primary goal was economic growth, and while social policies emerged too, they were conceived as subordinate to economic policy and economic growth (White, 1988; Johnson, 1999; Gough, 2004; Y-J Lee and Ku, 2007; Kim and Kim, 2008). Many social programmes were introduced in this period despite lower levels of socio-economic development than in European cases (Hort and Kuhnle, 2000), and despite the absence of strong leftist party politics or social movements (Aspalter, 2006). Social programmes, however, were carefully targeted and selectively implemented with a primary goal of securing the 'productive' labour force - male full-time workers (Peng, 2014) - while minimizing state provision for universal social welfare (Shin, 2000). Limited state welfare commitment necessitated a heavy reliance on the family and the market for welfare, including care. Thus, we may call Korea in this period merely 'a developmental state' rather than 'a developmental welfare state'.

The developmental state of Korea was seriously challenged following the Asian economic crisis of 1997 (Kwon, 2007). The social security system proved too weak to successfully absorb impacts from the economic crisis and economic restructuring. Demand for fundamental welfare reforms was mounting internally, as well as from external international bodies such as the World Bank. In response, the crisis-period administration (1998-2003) formally adopted 'productive (or productivist) welfare' as a new paradigm (Holliday, 2000; Kuhnle, 2002). Under this approach, the status of social policy was elevated from a subordinate position to an indispensable partnership with economic policy (Office of the President, 1999), and a series of social programmes was either substantially reformed or newly adopted, leading to a rapid increase in government's social expenditure (Y-M Kim, 2008). While the legacy of the developmental state was not completely phased out by the productive welfare regime (YH Kim, 2003; Kim and Kim, 2008), there was a marked shift in the dominant welfare rationale in Korea from a residual and reluctant stance to a more universal and positive one (Peng and Wong, 2008; Peng, 2009).

The ideas and institutions of productive welfare of the Kim Dae-jung government (1998-2003) were succeeded by the Roh Moo-hyun administration (2003-2008). Continuing with the welfare expansion initiated by the previous administration, the Roh government staged 'social investment' as a new welfare paradigm (Government-Civil Joint Taskforce, 2006). It should be noted that valuing social investment is not an entirely new element in Korean welfare state history. As Gough (2004) stresses, the focus of developmental and productivist social policy was social investment rather than social protection - the traditional focus of Western social policy. The social investment approach from the mid-2000s in Korea, however, became more explicit and developed some novel elements, reflecting shifting policy concerns. The government at that time faced multiple challenges: economic performance was below expectations, and poverty and income-inequality were increasing. Ageing and care also emerged as social concerns as a result of a falling total fertility rate (Peng, 2011a). In these contexts, social investment was presented as a comprehensive solution to save the economy, the welfare state, as well as the regime's political stability. Here the relationship between welfare and economy (development) was more positively framed than in the productive welfare regime: welfare not just assists economic development but it can also actively generate and sustain economic development. So, social policy was no longer subordinate to economic policy in Korea; rather, it began to be approached as an essential element for the nation's social and economic sustainability.

A social investment approach as had been promoted in other countries from the 1990s, typically emphasizes human capital development and activation policies, and children and (economically inactive) women are primary considerations (Esping-Andersen et al., 2002; Jenson, 2012; Saraceno, 2015; Papadopoulos and Velázquez Leyer, 2016). Likewise, the Roh administration's social investment approach targeted children and women (or broadly 'family'), in order to address social reproductive concerns linked to the social and economic implications of ageing and a shrinking population (Government-Civil Joint Taskforce, 2006; Government of Korea, 2010). The combination of a declining fertility rate and extended life expectancy has rapidly transformed Korea into one of the fastest ageing societies on the globe. According to the 2010 national census, the population aged 65 and over consists of 11 per cent of the total population of Korea. While that is not very high by OECD standards, the speed of increase in the over-65 population is remarkable: it was only 3 per cent in 1970 and increased to 7 per cent in 2000 (Statistics Korea, 2014a). What the Korean government problematizes is the extremely low fertility rate: the total fertility rate in Korea has dropped sharply since the 1970s, and has remained around 1.2 per cent after having hit its lowest level of 1.08 per cent in 2005 (Government of Korea, 2005: 17). Reversing the ageing trend by increasing the fertility rate has since become the utmost policy goal for successive Korean governments (Government of Korea, 2005, 2010).

Korea's transitions from developmental to productivist to social investment welfare state are not distinct regime changes and are surely path-dependent. The dominance of the concern for societal reproduction in policy making from the mid-2000s, however, marks a significant difference from the previous social investment approach under the developmental and productivist welfare paradigms, which focused almost exclusively on productive issues (Peng, 2011a, 2014; Lee and Baek, 2014). The Korean governments, as in other leading economies in East Asia, have long been committed to human capital development by emphasizing the investment in education, healthcare and work-force training (Aspalter, 2006). However, the expansion of universal childcare and work-home reconciliation since the mid-2000s in Korea seem to be more directly related to the falling fertility rate and the concerns for its (potential) social and economic repercussions (Kim YM, 2007; Peng, 2011a). Deeply concerned with the 'reproductive crisis' and its economic implications, the government developed mid- to long-term policy roadmaps - the 'Basic Plan for the Low fertility and Ageing Society' (Government of Korea, 2005, 2010). In this initiative, the importance of public support for marriage, maternity, childcare and work-home reconciliation has been stressed as effective

measures to increase the fertility rate (Government of Korea, 2010). Social investment in Korea now represents "the latest justification for social policy" for both the productive and reproductive capacity of the society, as in many Western welfare states (Deeming and Smyth, 2015: 298).

Reflecting the persistent 'methodological nationalism' of much welfare state scholarship (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002; Clarke, 2005), analysis of the social investment paradigm in Korea and elsewhere is focused on the mobilization of the productive and reproductive potentials of 'citizens' (see Esping-Andersen et al., 2002). As we now move on to argue, however, through the analysis of marriage migration and its policy architecture, it becomes apparent that the social investment approach in Korea stretches beyond its own national borders and incorporates non-citizens too.

MARRIAGE MIGRATION GROWTH IN KOREA IN THE CONTEXT OF 'REPRODUCTIVE CRISIS'

In parallel with the development of the welfare state, Korea has transformed itself from a predominantly migrant-sending to a predominantly migrant-receiving country. Korea had remained virtually shut to international migrants until the 1970s. Confident, however, that economic development was on track, from the late 1970s the Korean government sought to attract human resources from abroad. Starting with investors, traders and engineers, small numbers of migrants from nearby Asian countries began to arrive from the 1980s, but with the introduction of non-skilled labour migration schemes from the 1990s, numbers began to increase significantly. While the scale of migration is still small by global comparison, the speed of growth has been dramatic, with the migration stock rising from less than 50,000 in 1990 to almost 1.8 million in 2014 (KIS, 2015).

Marriage migration - the entry of foreign spouses of Korean nationals - has been a major route, together with unskilled labour migration, to Korea. While the growth rate began to stabilize in 2010 due to tightened monitoring of international marriages, the stock of marriage migrants continues to increase: in 2014 they numbered more than 150,000 and accounted for 8 per cent of the total migrant population (KIS, 2015). In contrast to most other routes of migration in Korea, which have been designed on the principle of the mobile circulation of labour, marriage migration is expected to, and usually does, lead to permanent settlement.

Thus, marriage migrants constituted 79 per cent of all naturalization cases in Korea in the period 2005 to 2013 (KIS, 2014a). Similar to unskilled labour migration to Korea, the majority of marriage migrants are from nearby Asian countries - China (41 per cent), Vietnam (26 per cent), Japan (8 per cent) and Philippines (7 per cent) (KIS, 2015). In contrast to labour migration, however, the marriage migration route, as elsewhere in Asia (Yamanaka and Piper, 2005), is highly feminized; about 85 per cent are women (KIS, 2015).

The growth of marriage migrants in Korea has resulted from an increase in international marriages. International marriages first became noticeable from the early 1990s when ethnic Korean women from China were invited by rural Korean bachelors. The source of brides diversified with time, however, and by the 2000s brides were arriving from Central and Southeast Asia (J Kim et al., 2013; Torneo, 2016). Before the new millennium, international marriage was rare in Korea; in the context of an ethnically homogenous society, marrying a foreigner was highly stigmatized (H-K Lee, 2008). International marriages, however, have grown fast since 2000: they made up 4 per cent of all marriage cases in 2000 and had increased to 14 per cent by 2005, before gradually stabilising at around 9 per cent; over 7 out of 10 involve a Korean husband and a foreign wife (Statistics Korea, 2014b).

This highly feminized migration route, from the demand-side, is related to the so-called ‘bachelor surplus’ in Korea (J Kim et al, 2013). A skewed sex ratio caused by strong family planning policies from the 1950s to the 1980s led to a severe mismatch in the marriage market (Seol, 2006). Korea traditionally has had a strong preference for sons, and sex selection (in other words, sex-selective abortion) occurred in the context of discouragement of multiple child-bearing. The sex off-balance reached its highest in 1990 with a male to female ratio of 117:100. After three decades of tight family planning and selective birth, some males at their marriage age, especially those living in rural areas, found themselves with an insufficient supply of potential native brides (J Kim et al., 2014). The enhanced social and economic status of Korean women has also contributed to the mismatch (Park, 2011). Higher and extended education of women means increased career aspirations and delayed or given-up marriages. Even those women considering marriage expect their male partners to have better educational backgrounds and occupational prospects. Where females have a wider choice than males, there is no reason for them to marry down the social and economic ladder. The marriage market in disadvantaged areas, especially in the country-side, was particularly squeezed, leaving some would-be bridegrooms virtually no option but to look overseas (H Lee, 2012). Exploiting this situation, international marriage businesses flourished and foreign

brides became a common sight from the early 2000s, at first in rural areas and later in cities as well.

The development of transnational solutions to address personal or family level reproductive needs has been widely observed by scholars through the lens of 'global care chains' (Hochschild, 2000; Parreñas, 2000), which some conceive as comprising, in addition to care, reproductive activities including sexual relationships (Kofman, 2012; Yeates, 2012). Clearly female marriage migrants have been sought for various care roles as wives, mothers and daughters-in-law for Korean men and their families (IOM, 2010), and this can be understood as another example of the growing international division in social reproductive labour linked to uneven patterns of globalization, which frequently result in highly exploitative conditions for female migrants (Parreñas, 2000). The distinct focus of this article, however, is the institutional dimensions of the phenomenon. In other words, our analysis aims to make sense of how Korean governments have instrumentalized marriage migrants and rationalized their policies in order to address the 'reproductive crisis' by assisting them to become additional members of the society and replenish the population by bearing the next generation. We argue that the social investment approach to welfare in general in the context of reproductive crisis is key to understanding the policy formulation for marriage migrants and their families.

MARRIAGE MIGRATION POLICIES AS SOCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

It was some local governments, in an effort to address diminishing population levels, which began to actively engage in the international marriage process, for example, by subsidizing travel expenses and arranging marriage ceremonies for free (H-K Lee, 2008). Since the late 2000s, however, the central government also has established policies targeting marriage migrants. A legal frame of marriage migration policies was developed through the enactment of the 'Multicultural Families Support Act' in 2008. The purpose of the Act is "to help multicultural family members enjoy a stable family life, and contribute to the improvement of their quality of life and integration into society" (Article 1). 'Multicultural families' are defined as families comprised of a lawful migrant (including those already naturalized), married to a Korean national, and their children. It is important to note that the term

‘multicultural’ as used in Korean policy is neither a theoretically-grounded definition nor a direct reference to ‘multiculturalism’ or ‘multicultural policy’ as understood in the West (Y-s Lee, 2011; M Kim, 2013). Rather, the expression ‘multicultural people’ was introduced as an alternative to the then prevalent expressions of ‘mixed race’ or ‘foreign blood’, which have derogative and exclusionary connotations.

We should note that marriage migration policies are framed as family policies as much as (im)migration policies in Korea (H-K Lee, 2008). Marriage migrants, therefore, represent a rather atypical position in Korea where anti-settlement is the prevailing goal of migration policy (Seol and Skrentny, 2009). Unlike most other types of migrant, marriage migrants are supposed (and encouraged) to settle permanently, and they are the recipients of a targeted programme of social support to achieve this. That is the rationale resulting in marriage migration policy intersecting with other policy areas, notably social security, care and education. Unsurprisingly, the family-policy related ministry, currently The Ministry of Gender Equality and the Family, takes the lead role in formulating and implementing the policy package known as ‘The Basic Plan for Multicultural Family Policy’, of which the first plan ran 2010 to 2012 and the second 2013 to 2017. Among others, the fast and complete adaptation and integration of marriage migrants and their children ‘as a family’ is a primary goal of these plans (MOGEF, 2012).[1] This is because their failure in adaptation and integration potentially jeopardizes the entire process of production and reproduction of the Korean family, which, we maintain, is a key policy concern for the Korean social investment welfare state.

Although not explicit in the law, ‘multicultural family policies’ target a certain type of marriage migration: female migrants married to Korean men (by birth) (Seol et al., 2009). As a consequence, other types of marriage migration, such as foreign husbands or marriages between migrants, are largely irrelevant to the policies. From the outset, ‘multicultural family policy’ was designed to support female marriage migrants and their families through their life course (see MOHW, 2008). As Table 1 outlines, the life course comprises all stages of family life which a typical (female) marriage migrant might go through: from marriage preparation, the formation of a family, the expansion of a family through child bearing and rearing, to potentially marital breakdown. A range of policies are specified for each stage to assist marriage migrants perform various social reproductive roles following the life course of married women in the family. This section continues by investigating how government policies intervene in this process both within the nation state and by acting transnationally,

and why this particular form of migration-social policy nexus has emerged as part of the Korean social-investment welfare state.

[TABLE 1 about here]

Assisting bride recruitment and family formation

The Korean government assists its citizens in finding wives, forming families and maintaining marital relationships. As argued above, the rapid increase in marriage migration in Korea is related to the phenomenon of 'bachelor surplus' resulting in some men having had difficulty finding a marriage partner and forming a family. Failure to marry in Korea is traditionally seen as a personal and family crisis of reproduction, so it is problematized and stigmatized, although these attitudes are changing. It is also perceived as a public problem, however, as delay and decline in marriage can lead to failure to reproduce the next generation and translates into sub-replacement fertility levels. The Korean government, therefore, has been concerned to address this 'reproductive crisis', and admitting more (female) marriage migrants has been explicitly discussed as one solution to guarantee the demographic sustainability of the country. Thus, the government asserted that growth in multicultural families can curb the low-fertility and the ageing trend in Korea, especially in rural areas, by increasing the fertility rate (MOHW, 2008).

Much policy effort has been made to maintain and streamline the supply of marriage migrants. In the early 2000s when the marriage migration industry first emerged in Korea unfettered by government regulation, there were reports of widespread abuse against migrant women, including human rights violations and deceived or forced marriages (Seol et al., 2005). As a consequence, the governments of sending countries such as the Philippines and Cambodia, temporarily halted marriage migration to Korea or sought similar measures. Facing this crisis in 'bride outsourcing', the Korean government began to regulate the industry, and in an effort to appease concerns it dispatched government officials (called 'international marriage migration officers') to the major sending countries to share information with their governments and to help coordinate the export of marriage migrants to Korea.

Assisting integration and family stability

Once marriage migrants arrive in Korea and the legitimacy of the marriage is confirmed, they are encouraged to attend a social integration programme and are given various incentives to do so. For example, if they successfully complete the programme, they are exempted from presenting a language proficiency test score when applying for a change from a marriage migration visa to a permanent residence visa, and a more simplified procedure is applied to them when they apply for citizenship. In sum, the Korean government has amended the nationality law in favour of marriage migrants (H-K Lee, 2008). Compared to other types of migrants, marriage migrants can obtain citizenship more easily: they have a much shorter waiting period (two years rather than five) before they are eligible to claim citizenship, and those with a child are exempted from the written component of the citizenship test.

Ensuring the stability of families formed through marriage migration is the next key objective of Korea's 'multicultural family policy'. Sustained marital relations are regarded as a barometer of the successful integration of marriage migrants and a prerequisite for the continuing reproduction of members of the society. As the number of international marriages increased in the first decade of the 2000s, so did the divorce rate among such families: it peaked at ten per cent of all divorces in 2011. Although their rate of divorce was not disproportionately high compared to marriages between co-nationals, the government perceived that their divorces indicated the failure of 'multicultural families' (MOGEF, 2012). To address divorce among marriage migrant families a policy priority was placed on preventing so-called 'fake marriages', since these are linked to spousal desertion (see H-K Lee, 2008; Freeman, 2011). International marriages became subject to a genuineness test prior to the granting of a marriage migrant visa or, further down the line, nationality, and marriage migrants are regularly monitored for continuing cohabitation with their Korean (male) spouse (IPC, 2012). These measures, combined with the introduction of an income threshold for marriage migration and accommodation and language proficiency conditions, have been introduced with the aims of increasing the likelihood of successful integration of marriage migrants and optimizing the conditions in which international marriage couples can start and maintain a family, with a view to ensuring their stability.[2]

Assisting raising the next generation

The focus on marriage migrants themselves in the early stage of 'multicultural family policy' has been extended to their children (MOHW, 2008; IPC, 2012; MOGEF, 2012). This is because the number of children being born to Korea's 'multicultural families' has been rapidly increasing (about five fold over seven years). The children born between Korean citizens and marriage migrants are, of course, Korean citizens at birth; however, the Korean government has incorporated them into the special policy framework for marriage migrants as a result of development and education concerns. Consequently, those children are often termed as 'marriage migrants' children' or 'children of multicultural families', both socially and policy-wise. The age distribution of those children was initially quite young, but with time they are gradually reaching school age and adolescence. In line with the social investment paradigm's instrumental concern with children as "citizen-workers of the future" (Lister, 2003: 427), on the one hand, the government has been concerned that poor development of marriage migrants' children and their failure in school will be a significant burden to Korea in the future (MOGEF, 2012), and on the other hand, the government has valued these children as human resource for "they have potential to be global leaders working for the country" (MOHW, 2008: 1). Thus, supporting the mothers (families) of future citizen-workers, and providing care and education for marriage migrants' children have received particular policy attention in the general immigration polices (IPC, 2008, 2012) and in 'multicultural family policies' (MOGEF, 2012).

Social security for low income marriage migrant families was introduced in 2007 with eligibility dependent on motherhood (parenthood) rather than on citizenship. Marriage migrants and their children, therefore, are covered by the contributory health care service regardless of their citizenship status, and other social security benefits are provided to those who are pregnant or have dependent children even before they are granted citizenship (MOHW, 2008: 23-4). Since 2006, the government has been providing marriage migrant mothers (parents) with a temporary emergency cash support to assist with living, medical and accommodation costs in case of crisis (loss of, or separation from, the main breadwinner). In addition, since 2007 the government has protected marriage migrant families through the public assistance programme (Basic Livelihood Security), regardless of citizenship. Even when divorced, marriage migrants can benefit from those income supports as long as they are the primary care-givers for young children. Providing tax-funded income maintenance to migrants who are yet to be naturalized is an unprecedented move in the history of the Korean welfare state. These policies connecting the social rights of marriage migrants to their

motherhood (parenthood) status clearly demonstrate that the role of the (female) marriage migrant as mother (parent) is facilitated by the Korean government (M Kim, 2013).

In addition, the Korean government is directly involved in the provision of care for marriage migrant children. Having investigated the care environment for the children of marriage migrants, it identified that the most common challenge 'multicultural families' encounter when raising children is the financial burden for children's care and education (Chun, 2013). In 2008 when the government began implementing its 'multicultural family policy', only 17 per cent of children in marriage migrant families, a third of the rate of all children, were enrolled in institutional childcare, and affordability issues were reportedly the main barrier to enrolment (MOHW, 2008: 29). The comparatively low childcare enrolment rate among the children of marriage migrants was perceived as problematic by the Korean government because it deprived these children of learning and socialization opportunities. To address this, in 2009 the government began to fully cover institutional childcare fees for marriage migrant families whose income level was lower than 70 per cent of the urban employees' average monthly income, regardless of their citizenship status. In 2010, the government decided to expand free institutional childcare to the entire 'multicultural family' population regardless of income level. Given that free institutional childcare was not yet available to the general population until 2012, it is surprising to see that the Korean government introduced free childcare provision - widely considered a hall mark of a social investment strategy (Jenson, 2012) – first for the children of migrant mothers, and rather than for those of citizen mothers. Such policy prioritization for children allows us to understand why less policy effort has been directed at supporting marriage migrants' care roles for adult family members (see Author, 2016).

Assisting in becoming citizen-the-worker

Concern with maximizing the life chances of the children of marriage migrants has also led to an emphasis in the 'multicultural family policy' package on getting marriage migrants into the labour market - becoming 'citizen-workers' - a further common feature of the social investment paradigm (Saraceno, 2015). Households consisting of marriage migrants are typically economically disadvantaged: almost 90 per cent of them earn less than the national average monthly income (Chun, 2013). In this context, marriage migrants' productive role as paid workers has come to be valued for its potential to raise household incomes and so

mitigate against the deleterious impact of poverty on children's development. While there is no attempt to facilitate crossing the boundary between labour migration and marriage migration, the Korean government supports migrant wives to "extend their migrant reproductive labour from domestic spheres to labour markets" (Lan, 2008: 1807).

The general immigration policy framework ('Basic Plan for Immigration Policy') and sub-policy framework targeting marriage migrants ('the Basic plan for Multicultural Family Policy') have equally emphasised 'capacity enhancement' of marriage migrants in order to strengthen their labour market integration (IPC, 2008, 2012; MOGEF, 2012). Accordingly, the government has introduced various programmes to assist marriage migrants' access the labour market, including education and training provisions designed to raise their human capital. Support is designed to be tailored to their particular situation - for example to help them utilize their foreign language skills, or to develop skills relevant to work in rural/agricultural areas. In addition, the government has developed an internship programme for marriage migrants, which provides financial incentives to companies hiring them. Part-time job opportunities in the public sector have also been expanded, which alongside the universal free public childcare discussed above, is supposed to help marriage migrants reconcile the multiple roles of family care givers and paid workers. Through these measures the government intends not only to secure marriage migrants themselves as economically contributing citizens, but also to help them achieve the economic security to successfully raise the future citizen-workers (their children).

CONCLUSION

We have examined how social investment has emerged as a dominant policy paradigm in the Korean welfare state, complementing the previous developmental and productivist approaches. We argued that the 'reproductive crisis' represented by the extremely low fertility rate has motivated this shift. From the mid-2000s, the social investment approach with a new emphasis on women's work-home reconciliation was articulated as a tool to address the 'reproductive crisis' by reversing the demographic trend which the government feared would lead to the deterioration of the productive potential of Korean society. In emphasizing work-home reconciliation policies, Korea's approach to social investment has much in common with the social investment strategies developed in Western and other East-Asian welfare

states (Peng, 2011b; Saraceno, 2015). New social risks are experienced in a comparable context among advanced economies both in East and West, and East Asian welfare states, which have long prioritized economic development began to see social investment strategies as pragmatic solutions to them with their possibility of win-win, i.e., achieving social goals such as poverty reduction, human capital development and replenishing the labour force with economic benefits such as job-creation (Yang, 2007; Peng, 2011a).

Analysis of the social investment paradigm has been undertaken largely in line with the 'container-model' of the welfare state, with the focus on policies directed at nation-state insiders within the borders of the nation-state. Through a focus on marriage migration policies, however, we have demonstrated a distinctly transnational dimension to Korea's social investment strategy, with policies that extend beyond the nation-state and incorporate nation-state outsiders as both mothers of citizen-workers of the future and as citizens of the future themselves. By locating the growth in marriage migration and the development of marriage migration policies in the context of Korea's 'reproductive crisis', particularly related to the so-called 'bachelor surplus', we analysed how the Korean government has sought to address Korea's 'reproductive crisis' at personal, family and national levels through the contributions of female marriage migrants. The Korean government has been promoting marriages with foreign brides and their migration to Korea, and has been providing marriage migrants with targeted policies with the aim that they settle and perform their expected social reproductive roles effectively. These targeted policies, 'multicultural family policies', are structured according to the life course of female marriage migrants in order to meet their specific needs at each stage. Especially for the recruitment stage, the Korean government often acts transnationally by dispatching officials and actively cooperating with the governments of sending countries.

It also provides orientation, adaptation and integration programmes, and marriage migrants have a comparatively high level of social protection. As a family member, marriage migrants become Koreans' wives and mothers, and they themselves may become Koreans eventually. In this way, Korean society can secure much needed reproductive resources. While there are no policies explicitly aimed at encouraging marriage migrants to have children, there is targeted support for the biological and social reproduction of children. The childcare responsibilities of marriage migrants have been actively socialized, and it is remarkable to see that, at some point, care provision for the children of 'multicultural families' had been more generous than that for children in general. This situation provoked complaints

from Korean nationals and other migrant groups, and the government later acknowledged that policy resources had been unequally concentrated on supporting marriage migrants and their families, and that this had consequently provoked antipathy towards 'multicultural family policy' (IPC, 2012; MOGEF, 2012). What rationalizes and politically justifies these policies is Korea's adoption of the social investment approach, which has been motivated in large part by reproductive concerns. It is through the lens of social investment that we can also understand why the expected contribution of marriage migrants extends to the productive sphere too. In the context of widespread low incomes among marriage migrant households, migrant mothers' paid work is valued for its potential to increase the material well-being of their children, a prerequisite for maximising their future economic productive capacity (Esping-Andersen, 2002).

The focus of this article has been on making sense of Korea's policy approach to marriage migration, rather than on critically evaluating the approach and its consequences. It is important to highlight, however, that some scholars have been critical of the social investment paradigm as played out in Western welfare regimes for its instrumentalization of women's roles at the expense of women's own well-being concerns (Saraceno, 2015). Indeed, Korea's multicultural family policy package poses a number of risks for marriage migrants, particularly given the strong gender division of labour and power asymmetries within marriage in Korea. Future research should attend to the lived experiences of marriage migrants to understand more fully the vulnerabilities inherent in the Korean government's top-down instrumental approach to them (see NK Kim, 2009), examining for example, women's experiences as they await citizenship and if they do not bear children or maintain a marital relationship. The identification of a transnational dimension to the social investment paradigm in the case of Korea also suggests a research agenda for those researching the social investment paradigm in other national contexts.

NOTES

[1] While the Korean government expresses high expectations of marriage migrants' full social 'integration' (Y-J Lee et al., 2006; JK Kim, 2011), what 'integration' means is a matter of contention. Although respect for cultural diversity, anti-discrimination and harmonious co-existence are manifested in the policy, many consider it as a form of assimilation policy

(Lim, 2010) or "integration policy conditional on assimilation" (S Kim, 2015: 63). This is because the key components of so-called 'support policies' are oriented towards helping marriage migrants become quickly naturalized and fully compliant with Korean cultural and social norms, especially as family members, rather than towards maintaining their own ethnic and cultural identities.

[2] A key question yet to be researched is whether the policies introduced to support integration actually achieve their goal. Evidence from a number of European countries suggests that there is no direct and causal relationship between restrictive conditions of entry/stay for family migrants, such as language proficiency and minimum income thresholds, and their subsequent integration (Oliver, 2013).

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